Apple II Variabilty
Apple Desktop Bus (ADB) Mice

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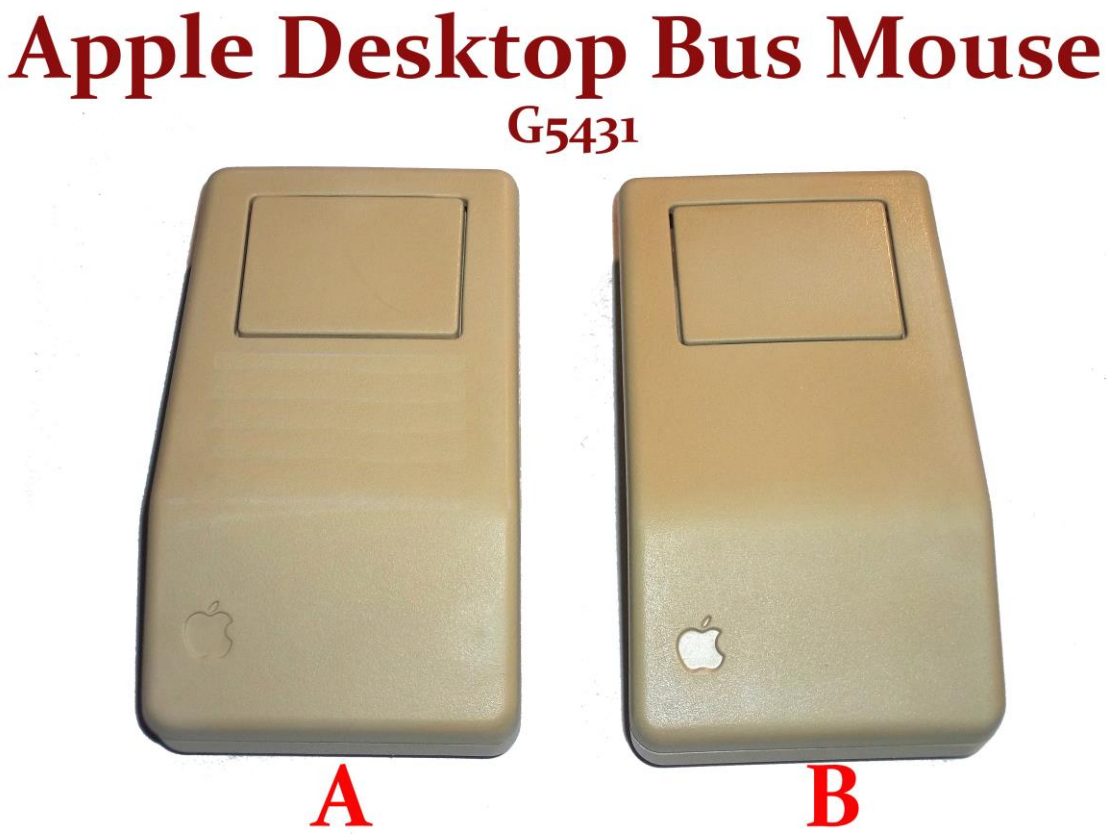
The Apple II line of computers and peripherals have a high degree of variability within models, making it challenging to replace parts. This goes beyond versions of chips to much of the hardware components. In this short article, I will describe the variety of parts in the Apple Desktop Bus Mouse, part number G5431.

Looking at two Apple Desktop Bus mice, they may appear to be identical:



I have labelled the two mice, both of which are G5431 parts, as A and B to differentiate between them in this article, and these designations have no meaning outside this article.

When you flip the mice over to view their undersides, at very first glance they look alike (the cases sans balls and internal components are shown):

But upon closer inspection, you begin to see differences. The first thing you notice is that the holes for the roller balls are different sizes, indicative that the balls themselves are different sizes:

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The next thing you notice is that the ring is different, with one ring having ridges around 60% and no finger recesses (B) while the other (A) has none of these ridges but does have two finger recesses:

If you look carefully at the labels, you see differences there, too:

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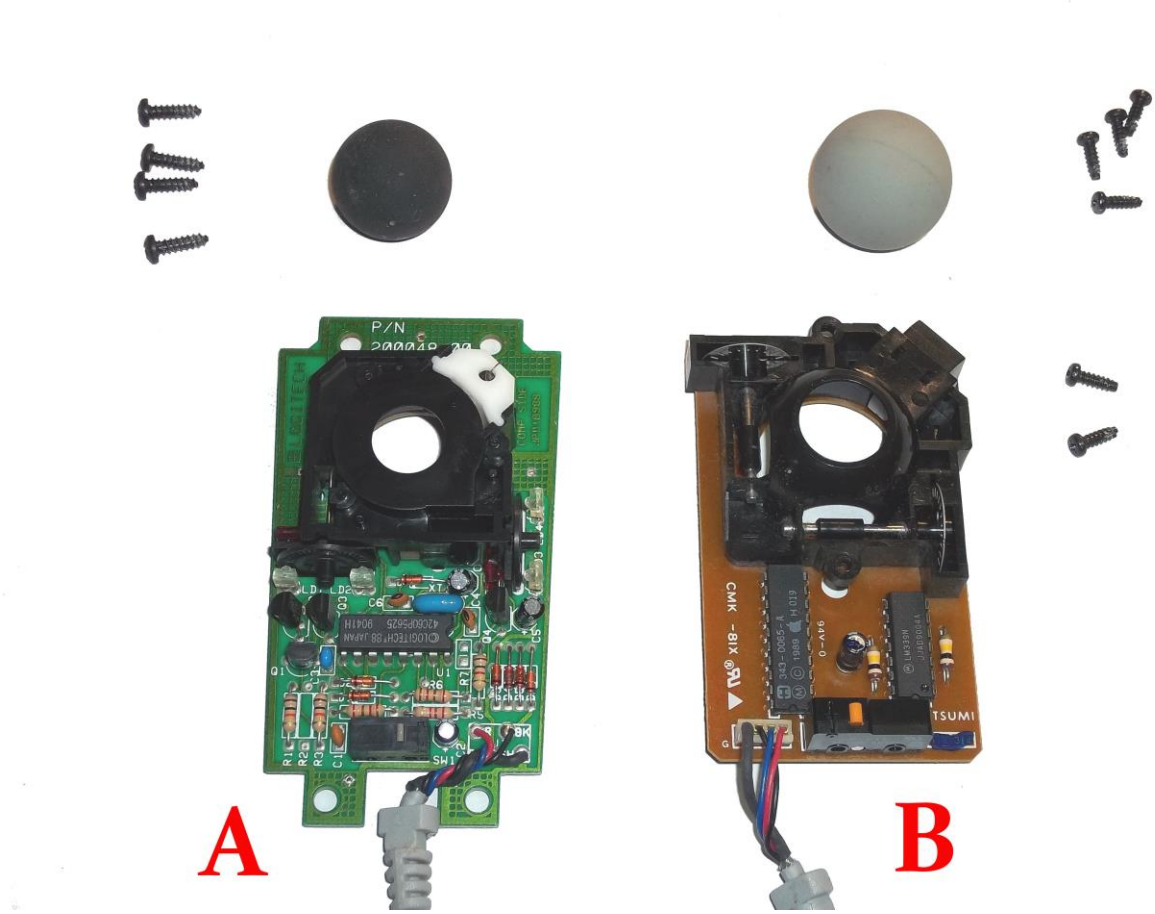
The key difference is that one (A) is Made in Taiwan whereas the other (B) is Made in Malaysia:

Looking beyond their shells, you can see that the internal organs are also quite different:



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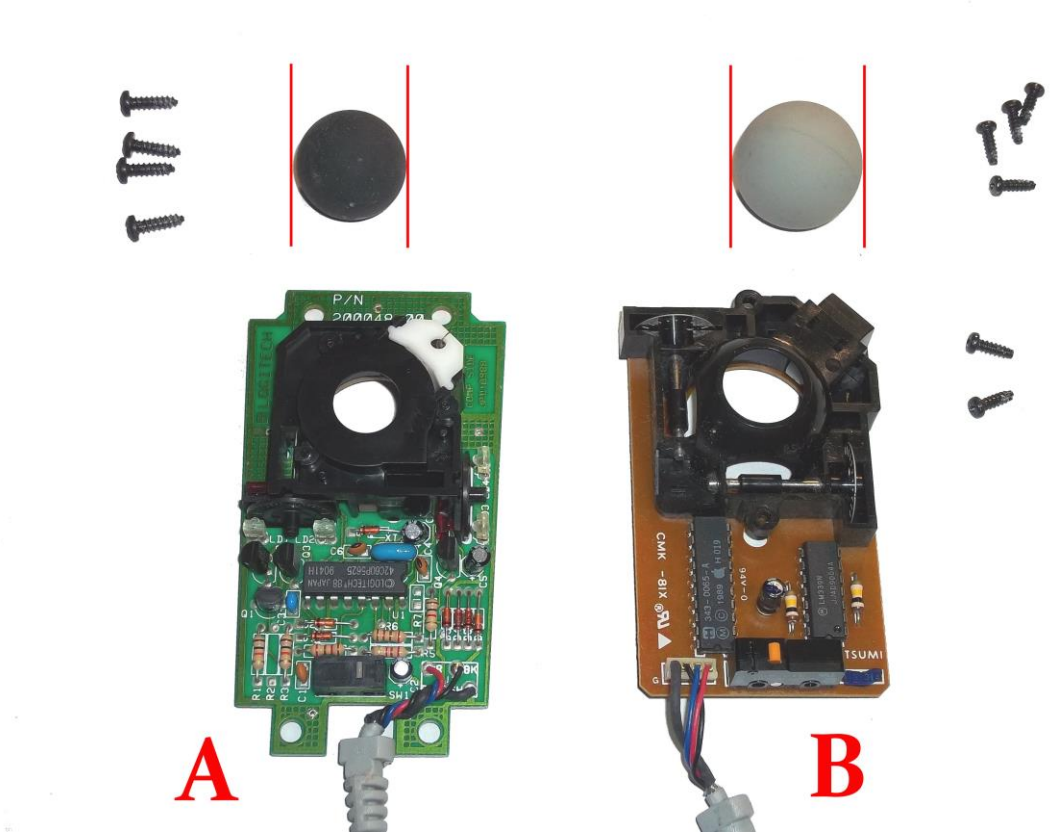
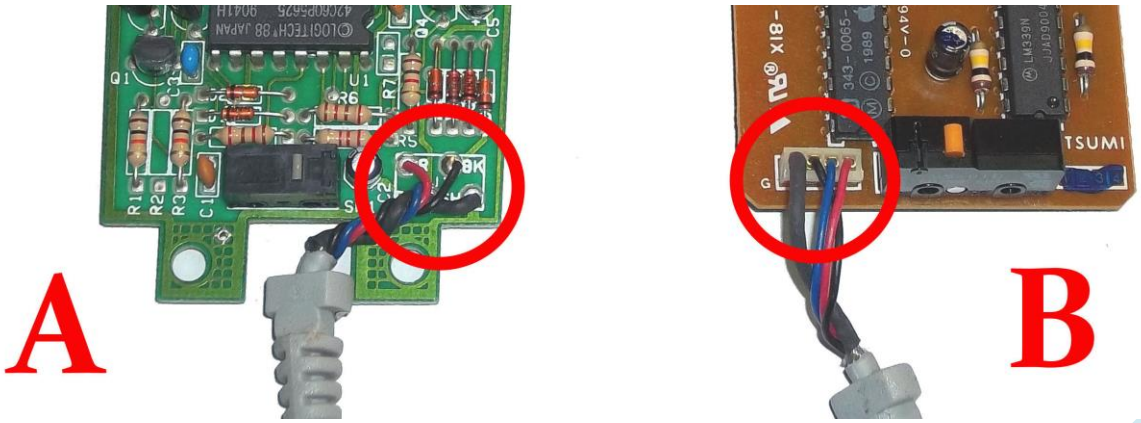
As noted earlier with the holes for the roller balls, the roller balls themselves are different with A having a smaller and, in this case, black ball while B has a larger, and in this case, white ball:



Next, notice there the ADB cable attaches to the circuit board – on the right in A and on the left in B:



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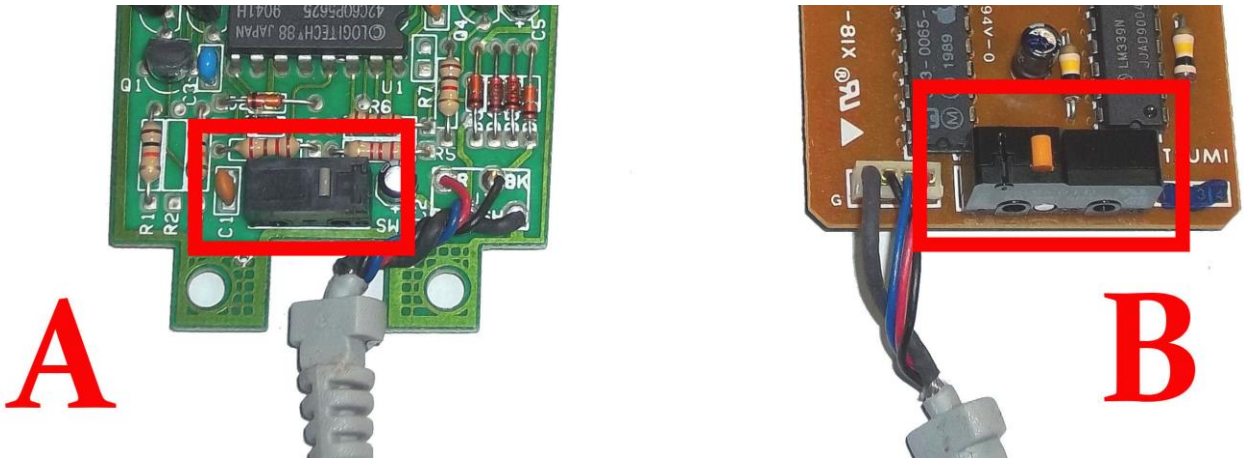
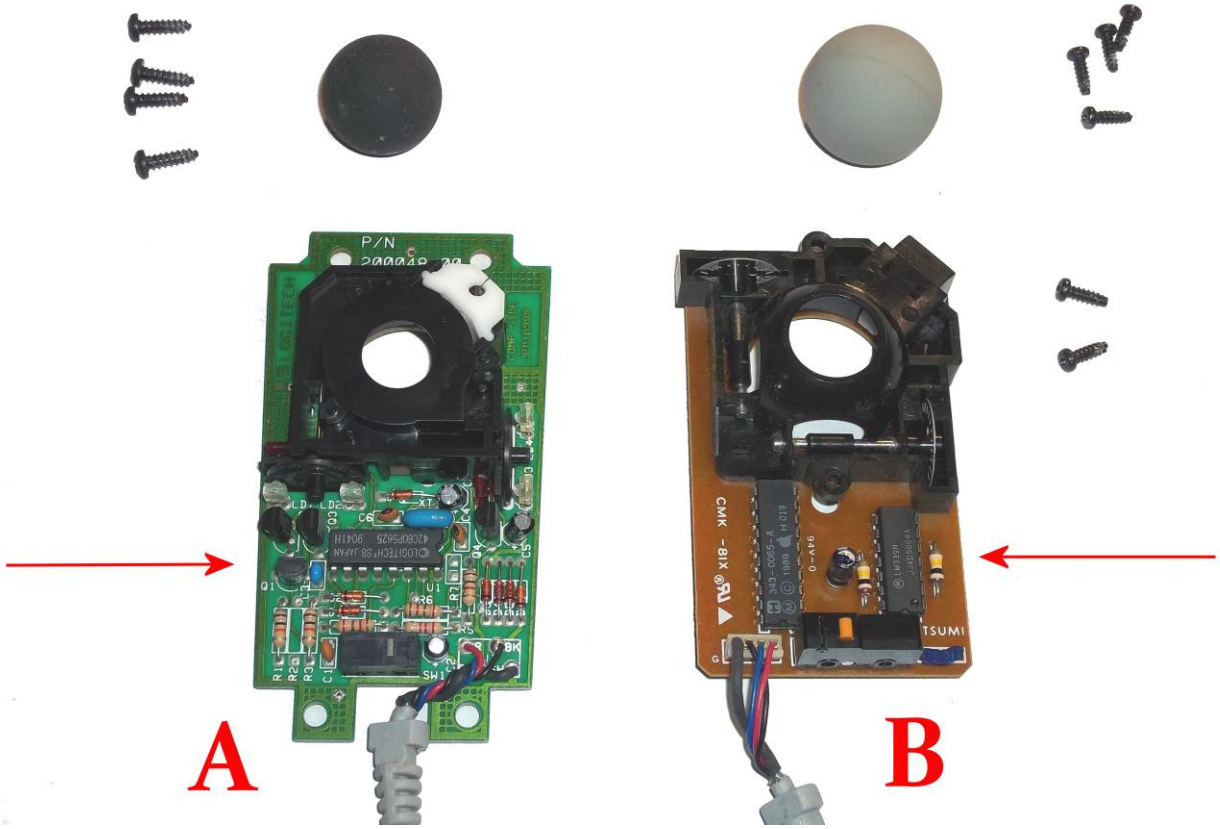
Next, notice the size of the button switch, which is smaller with a gray switch in A vs a larger with orange switch in B:



Now notice the components on the internal circuit board. There are a LOT more components in A than there is in B.



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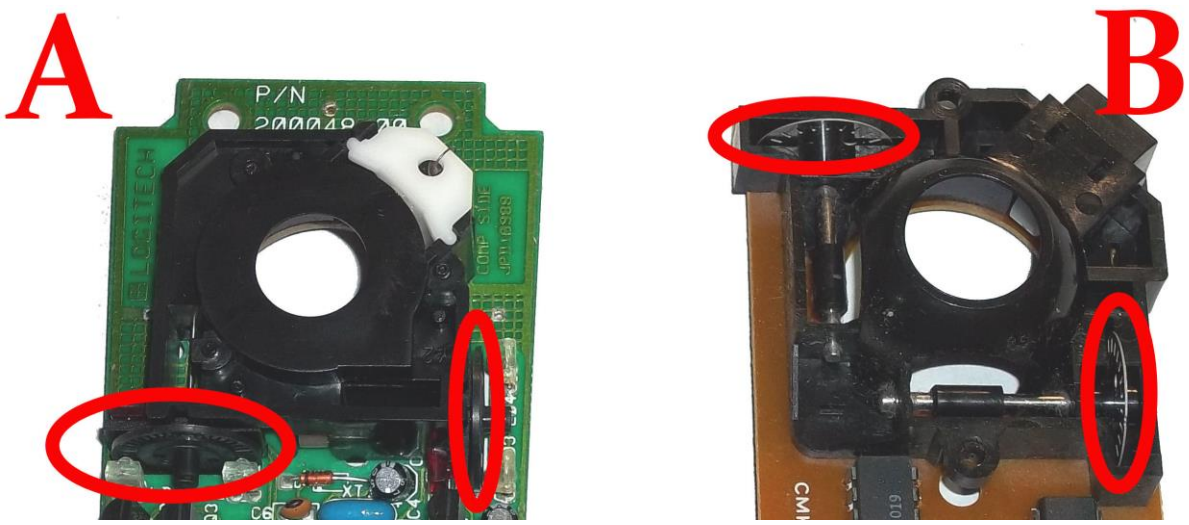
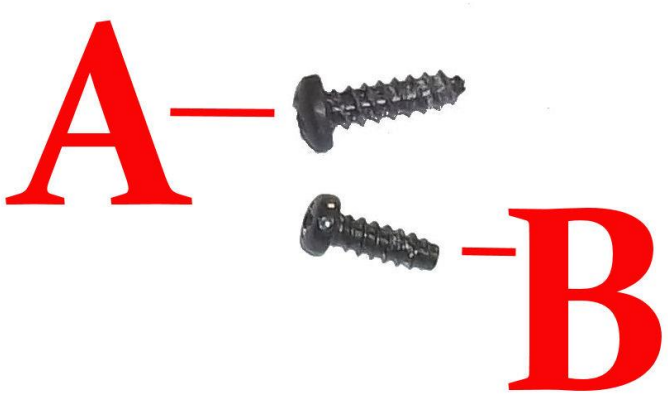
Also notice the differences in the roller ball bay and the locations of the wheels:



Finally, the screws. Both mice use 4 screws to affix the top and bottom halves of their shells, but the screws in A are larger than in B.



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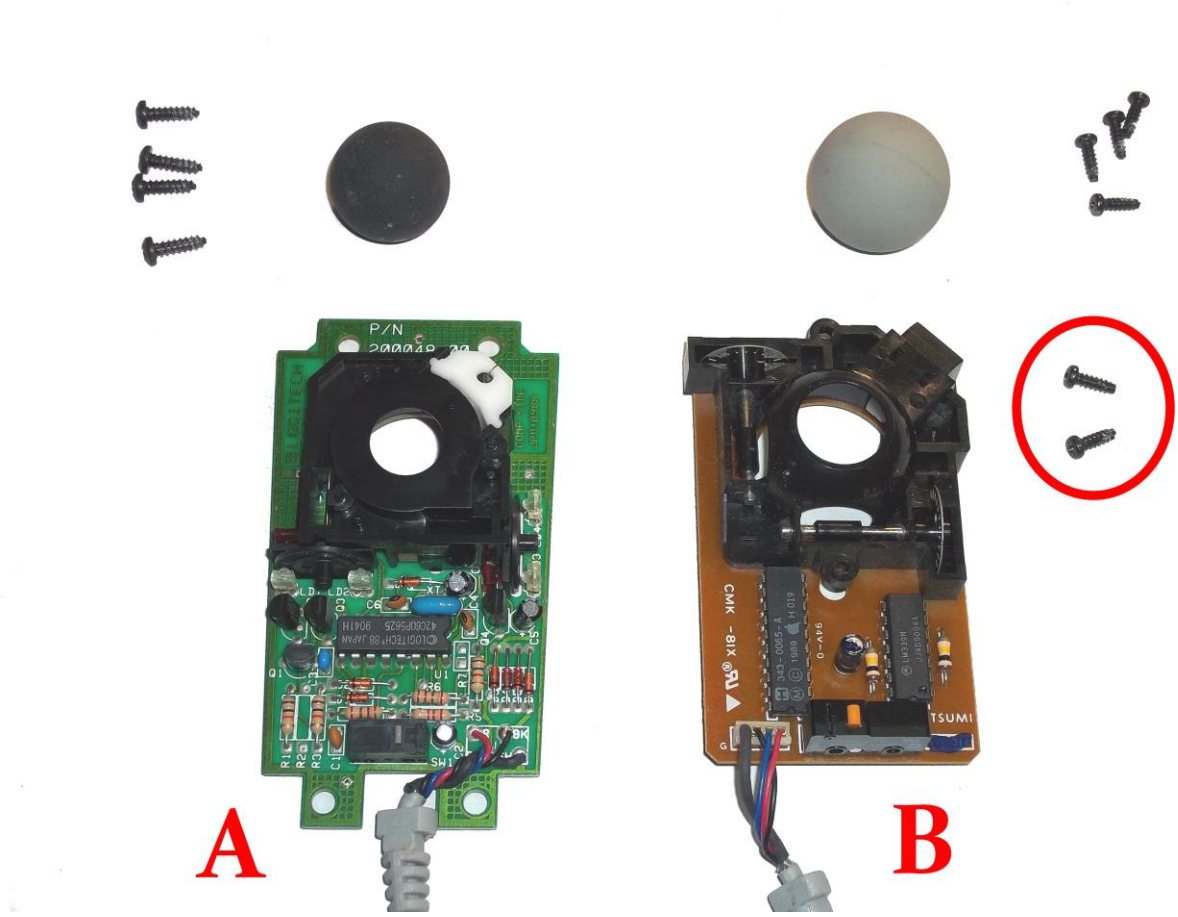
In addition, the internals are screwed to the base in B but only set freely (unscrewed) in A, so there are two additional screws in B:



Again, both of these mice are Apple Desktop Bus mice G5431 but they differ considerably in components – size, locations and even color and shape – as well as where they were manufactured. So if you are purchasing a mouse "for parts" to repair your current mouse, you need to look beyond the cover and even beyond the G5431 designation to where they were made.

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